

Money-Saving Repairs & Maintenance Shortcuts

two others in the neighborhood. People were so impressed with mine that they wanted it on theirs, too," he says.

Robert Ellis, High Hill, Mo.: "I designed this tool to loosen the belt that drives the pickup on older model Vermeer balers to make it easier to grease the bars at each end of the pickup. It saves a lot of skinned knuckles," says Robert Ellis, High Hill, Mo.



The baler's pickup is equipped with five or six bars, with grease fittings at both ends. To grease the bars, the operator has to either loosen the belt or remove it so he can rotate the pickup. The tool that Ellis fabricated simply takes the tension off an idler on the belt, allowing the operator to slip the belt off the pulley. The idler is attached by a short metal bracket to a shaft.

Ellis welded a 6-in. length of rectangular tubing and a short stub pipe together, with a metal tab on one side. The device slips onto a 2-ft. steel pipe handle. When the tool slips



over the shaft, the tab extends over the idler bracket. The operator pushes down on the pipe handle to lower the idler and release tension on the belt.

"My brother Kermit uses it on his baler. He had been using a crescent wrench to rotate the shaft, but it didn't work very well and he often skinned his knuckles," says Ellis.

Roger Kuntz, K-Tech, 5251 Co. Rd. X, Grainfield, Kansas 67737 ph 785 673-5560: You can keep your wire welding gun close at hand with this new "magnetic base" welding gun holder.

It stands 17 in. tall and has a 5-in. dia. magnetic base at the bottom, and a pair of "V" shaped, foam-covered metal prongs at the top.

"The magnet has 60 lbs. of pulling power, so it provides a firm grip on any metal surface and won't tip over. Yet you can easily move it to wherever you need it," says inventor Roger Kuntz. "The foam grips are gentle on the wire gun and insulate it from arcing."

Wire welding guns are becoming more popular all the time, says Kuntz, but there's one big problem. "When you lay the gun down, the trigger can accidentally discharge and cause an unplanned wire feed with the gun sending out electrode sparks. It can be dangerous and annoying. It takes time and effort to lay the gun down just right so that it doesn't go off.

"To solve the problem, some people weld small metal prongs onto the sides of their welding table. But that won't help if you have to use the gun somewhere else and the holder is out of reach."

Sells for \$21.95 plus \$5 S&H.

Jim Matthews, Saskatoon, Sask.: "To come up with a cheap tarp, I go to our local lumber yard and pick up pieces of plastic that are used to wrap lumber when it's shipped. Normally, most lumber yards just throw this plastic away. I've found a variety of uses for these tarps. For example, I place them behind the doors inside grain bins in order to keep grain from leaking out. It works better than trying to seal the outside because the grain pushes the tarp against the door, sealing any cracks and holes. It's amazing how well this stops grain from leaking. It also saves a lot of duct tape.

"If you have a leak in a fuel tank or an engine cooling system, you can use a vacuum cleaner on the tank opening to create a good vacuum. (You might want to drain some coolant if it's very full). Once a good seal is formed, you can take the hose off or the drain tap and reseal it. Or, you can replace the hose while the vacuum is on the tank without having to drain the system. You can use this idea to change fuel filters or hydraulic fittings without spilling a drop.

"If you have a small shed without any electricity and want to have light inside it, you can use a solar battery charger to power a light. You can buy these solar battery chargers cheap at Wal-Mart and other stores. Just hook the charger up to a car battery. For lights you can use marker lights or other spare lights you already have around the farm or buy them cheap at surplus stores. If you want to get fancy you can hook up to an on-off wall switch."

Rich Vink, Topeka, Kansas: "To provide better light inside my machine shed, I've mounted theater stage lights on the building's trusses and aim the light beams down toward my farm equipment. It saves the hassle of using a drop light and also results in better lighting."

Steve Nelson, Winston-Salem, N.C.: "I had a problem with the 2-WD shift lever on my Kawasaki Mule. The lever wouldn't release until it really torqued up and made a big bang. The problem is the spring that returns the selector lever at the transmission is too weak in its original location. I decided to release the tension and index the base of the spring to the next ridge on the housing. Then I retensioned the lever and connected the spring to the lever. Problem solved."

Bradley Moore, Krypton, Ky.: "A reed valve on my small Sears compressor broke and no replacement was available. I made one from a feeler gauge leaf but it didn't last very long. Then two years ago I made another one from a plastic Pennzoil oil container, and it's still working."

Chuck Golankiewicz, Pittsburgh, Penn.: "When Troy Bilt told me they couldn't supply parts for my 33-in. mower, I had a local machine shop make parts and they work even better than the original ones.

"The driveshafts on my Deere tracked snowblower rusted and froze up. After cleaning, I drilled and installed grease fittings to prevent further rusting.

"Keep a supply of parts and belts as replacements. Stick to one brand to make it easier. I prefer Briggs & Stratton."

Timothy Locke, Bremen, Ala.: "I had trouble leaving small walk-through gates open, so I attached screen door springs to them so they would close automatically.

"I have a small Yanmar tractor that's light on front, so I melted old wheel weights into an iron skillet to make front weights that hold the front end down."



Chris Kornkven, N6280 County P, Helenville, Wis. 53137 ph 920 699-2376: "To help keep my shop clean, I needed some way to store metal stock or other lengths of odds and ends. I had some extra lengths of wire stock panels on hand. I cut down the panels and hung three of them from the rafters in my shop, which are spaced 10 ft. apart. I

hung one panel from one rafter, and two panels from another rafter. Since the panels flex a little, I was able to spread apart the bottom ends of the two panels that hang from the one rafter. This setup lets me store long stock as well as shorter stock by putting the short stuff on the two panels that are close together."

Mini-Jack Gets Into Tight Spots

A tiny new hydraulic jack can get into tight spots, yet it has an amazing lift capacity of five tons.

The Sidewinder 9105A mini-jack has a retracted height of just 2 9/16 in. It operates either horizontally or vertically and can be used as either a jack or a spreader. Works great wherever there's not enough room to swing a hammer for driving out pins, and to take out dents, etc. It can also be used with a manual gear puller to apply force onto the jaws that hold the gear.

Sells for \$99.99 plus S&H.
Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tool Warehouse, Inc., 3410 East 42nd St., Minneapolis, Minn. 55406 (ph 800 753-4086



Tiny hydraulic jack has an amazing lift capacity of five tons. It can be used either horizontally or vertically.

or 612 722-4260; website: www.toolwarehouseinc.com.)

He Used Dynamite To "Pull" Car Engine

When David Curtis took an early 1980's Cadillac to a junk yard to scrap it, they wouldn't take it because he didn't have the title.

"They told me that without the title, they couldn't lawfully take the car unless the engine was removed from it," says David. "The law is designed to make it more difficult for thieves to sell stolen cars at scrap yards."

His son tried using a torch to cut the engine out of the car, even turning it upside down with a front-end loader to make it easier to get at the engine mounts. However, something caught on fire and before long the entire car was on fire. "It was a big smoking mess," says David.

They smothered the fire by dumping dirt onto the car.

They used 10 sticks of dynamite in the engine area with the car upside down, putting five sticks on each side of the frame rails. The sticks of dynamite were connected together with Primacord so they would go off at the same time. The scrap yard wouldn't take the car with an enclosed gas

tank on it so they used dynamite to get rid of the tank, too.

To reduce the noise and force of the blast, they used the loader to dump a pile of clay on top of the car again. Then they lit the fuse. The blast cut the car in half, separating the front part from the rear, and sent the engine flying. "The funniest part was that a column of fire and smoke 60 to 80 ft. in diameter immediately shot about 200 ft. up into the air. It even had a mushroom cloud on top of it," says David.

After the explosion, they loaded the two halves of the car onto a trailer and hauled it to the scrap yard.

David, who is a licensed dynamite blaster, says he doesn't recommend this idea to anyone who isn't licensed to blast dynamite. "I use dynamite to make irrigation ditches deeper, to remove big rocks from dirt roads, on beaver dams, and so on," he notes.

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